

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 02635 110949Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3952

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 2635

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, SY

SUBJECT: JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR COMMENTS ON INTERNAL SYRIAN SECURITY

REF: A. AMMAN 4410; B. DAMASCUS 2584

1. REVIEWED INTERNAL SYRIAN SECURITY SITUATION WITH JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR EL-NEMR JULY 9. HIS INFORMATION GENERALLY COINCIDES WITH THAT PROVIDED BY SENIOR SYRIAN SECURITY OFFICIAL IN DAMASCUS 2584 WITH FOLLOWING EXCEPTION.

2. ACCORDING EL-NEMR'S INFORMATION INCIDENT IN DAMASCUS' 'ADAWI DISTRICT' WAS GUN BATTLE BETWEEN SYRIAN SECURITY AND MEMBERS OF OUTLAWED MOSLEM BROTHERHOOD ORGANIZATION (IKHWAN AL-MUSLIMIIN). HE HAD NO NAMES TO SUPPORT THIS REPORT BUT MAINTAINED THAT BROTHERHOOD HAD BEEN ACTIVE IN RECENT MONTHS IN DAMASCUS AND ALEPPO. EL-NEMR BELIEVES THAT ALEPPO HAS BECOME HEADQUARTERS FOR THE BROTHERHOOD MOVEMENT IN SYRIA.

3. I ASKED HIS GENERAL ESTIMATE OF INTERNAL SITUATION. HE SAID HE BELIEVED ASAD REMAINED FULLY IN COMMAND AND THAT NOE OF THE BOMBINGS OF RECENT MONTHS, WHICH AS DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL INCLUDED ONE AGAINST JORDANIAN EMBASSY ITSELF, INDICATED DISSIDENTS HAD SUB-STATIAL BASE OF OPERATIONS IN SYRIA. I ASKED HIM TO

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COMMENT ON REPORT THAT THERE HAD BEEN BOMB IN ASAD'S OWN

HOUSE AS WELL AS IN THAT OF HIS BROTHER, RIFAT (AMMAN REFTEL). EL-NEMR DENIED THIS, SAYING HE HAD PERSONALLY INVESTIGATED RUMOR OF EXPLOSION AT ASAD'S HOME. HE HAS ESTABLISHED THAT ON DAY OF ASAD'S DEPARTURE FOR OFFICIAL VISIT TO JORDAN, JUNE 10, A BOMB HAD EXPLODED AT SOME DISTANCE FROM ASAD'S HOME. SARG SECURITY HAD ASSUMED THAT TARGET WAS PRESIDENT'S HOME BUT THAT PERPETRATORS UNABLE GET ANYWHERE NEAR. EL-NEMR DENIED KNOWLEDGE OF ANY BOMB IN HOME OF PRESIDENT'S BROTHER. HE NOTED THAT AMONG DOCUMENTS CAPTURED IN RECENT ARRESTS OF ARAB COMMUNIST ORGANIZATION MEMBERS MAP HAD BEEN FOUND ON WHICH HOMES OF PRESIDENT, RIFAT AND OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS HAD BEEN MARKED. SYRIAN SECURITY ASSUMED THESE WERE IN CONTEXT OF ACO PLANS TO MOVE AGAINST THOSE TARGETS AT SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE.

4. COMMENT: ABOVE ACCOUNT SHOULD PUT TO REST MORE STIMULATING VERSION ATTRIBUTED TO EL-NEMR AS REPORTED AMMAN 4410. WILL ATTEMPT DEVELOP FURTHER INFORMATION ON MOSLEM BROTHERHOOD ACTIVITIES IN SYRIA.
MURPHY

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